

## A CENTURY OF LIVONIAN STUDIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TARTU

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**Abstract.** The significance of the Livonian language and culture to Estonians is greater than mere historical closeness. The discipline of Livonian studies has been a part of Estonian national self-definition. The current article provides an overview of Livonian research and instruction since 1919 when the University of Tartu became the national university of Estonia. A consistent focus on Livonian language and culture during the last hundred years has been a good example of the Estonian national university's broader mission, where national and international dimensions interweave in many ways. The University of Tartu is the only institution in Estonia where the Livonian language has been approached in such a multifaceted and in-depth manner, and has been taught, researched, and popularised.

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### 1. An introductory survey of institutions and researchers of Livonian

The relevance of the Livonian language has long extended beyond borders and special features of this language have drawn attention on several levels. Already at the end of the 19th century, Livonian excited the broader interest of linguists of several countries. For example, it was Vilhelm Thomsen (1842–1927), a prominent Danish linguist of his time, who recognised the Livonian broken tone as being similar to a phenomenon in Danish (Thomsen 1890). The position of Livonian on the border of the Finno-Ugric and Indo-European languages and the emergence of unique language phenomena have made it interesting for

researchers of different backgrounds (see Blumberga 2011, Ernštreits 2011, 2013, Väiri 2016, Pajusalu 2019).

From the Estonian side, several institutions and people stand out. The Mother Tongue Society at the University of Tartu published the first five Livonian readers in the 1920s. Livonian folklore materials gathered by Oskar Loorits and others in the 1920s are stored in the Estonian Literary Museum and ethnographic materials are housed at the Estonian National Museum (Blumberga 2018). In the second half of the 20th century, the Institute of Language and Literature – along with the University of Tartu – became an essential centre of Livonian language research. The institute employed many noted scholars, including dialectologist Salme Tanning (1904–1962), who analysed the contacts between South Estonian dialects and Livonian, noted Livonian linguist Tiit-Rein Viitso (born in 1938) who would go on to become a University of Tartu professor, prominent researcher of Livonian folklore Kristi Salve (born in 1942), and others. All these Estonian scientists studied and began their academic careers at the University of Tartu.

Outside of Estonia, other traditional centres of Livonian language research have included Finland and Latvia. Aside from the University of Tartu, the longest and most diverse tradition of Livonian language research is found at the University of Helsinki (UH). Professors Eemil Nestor Setälä (UH Professor of Finnish language and literature 1893–1929) and Lauri Kettunen (UH Professor of Finnic languages 1929–1938, Professor of Estonian and close kindred languages 1939–1953) hold an important role in Livonian language research. Lauri Kettunen, historically one of the most influential researchers of Livonian, authored numerous research papers and other writings on Livonian, which included an extensive Livonian-German dictionary with a grammatical overview of Livonian (Kettunen 1938). Kettunen's successor was Lauri Posti (1908–1988), whose PhD thesis in 1942 dealt with the development of the Livonian sound system. Posti worked as a Professor of Finnic languages between 1953 and 1971; his successor was Seppo Suhonen (1938–2010), who held the same position working as a professor between 1978 and 2001. Suhonen's thesis *Die jungen lettischen Lehnwörter im Livischen* (1973) also focused on Livonian and addressed the Latvian loanwords found in Livonian. Suhonen studied Livonian in several ways, in addition to the vocabulary he also analysed Livonian phonetics, morphology, etc.

Since 2005, the Professor of Finnic Languages at the University of Helsinki has been Riho Grünthal (born in 1964), who analysed Finnic adpositions, including those in Livonian, in his PhD thesis (2003). Grünthal has also studied the history of Livonian and its contacts with neighbouring languages (Grünthal 2011, 2015). All of these Helsinki professors have cooperated closely with the University of Tartu; in recognition of this, the latter three have been awarded honorary doctorates by UT: Lauri Posti in 1982, Seppo Suhonen in 1994, and Riho Grünthal in 2019. In addition to these professors, other University of Helsinki researchers have also studied Livonian. For example, language historian Petri Kallio (born in 1969) has in recent years specified the position of Livonian within the Finnic languages and written an overview of the formation of the Livonian sound system (Kallio 2016). Santra Jantunen (born in 1983) has studied Livonian frequentative verbs (Jantunen 2014) and her master's thesis focused on Livonian temporal adverbials (2010).

In Latvia, the University of Latvia (founded in 1919) has been central to Livonian research, though a separate unit devoted to this work – the Livonian Institute – was founded only in 2018. At the University of Latvia, Livonian influences on Latvian vocabulary have been studied by the well-known Baltic linguist Jānis Endzelīns (1873–1961), who conducted his first scientific research at the University of Tartu. Later, Professor Marta Rudzīte (1924–1996) continued to study Latvian, Estonian, and Livonian language contacts. Her husband Tõnu Karma (1924–2014), who studied Finno-Ugric languages at the University of Tartu, was one of the central researchers and promoters of Livonian in Rīga in the late 20th and early 21st century. When Estonia regained its independence, several young people of Livonian origin came from Latvia to study at the University of Tartu.

The University of Latvia Livonian Institute, founded in 2018, is the first institution – not only in Latvia but also in the entire world – focusing specifically on Livonian studies. The institute is led by Valts Ernštreits, who defended his doctoral dissertation on literary Livonian at the University of Tartu in 2010. The institute's research focuses on the language, culture, and heritage of the Livonians, who also form one of the foundational elements of modern Latvian language and culture. The Livonian Institute is in active cooperation with Livonian and other community organisations, local governments, state institutions,

and entrepreneurs in order to advance research across a wide range of topics relating to the Livonians. The institute's international networks transcend borders and involve various research topics as well as subjects outside academic life.

In light of the above-named people and institutions, it can be stated that during the 20th century, the study of Livonian expanded substantially. Comparative-historical interest in Livonian was supplemented by synchronic analysis of Livonian linguistic phenomena at universities in many countries. The number of Livonian language researchers continued to increase in the second half of the 20th century, even though Livonian was already a highly endangered language and has only become more so to this day. Livonian pronunciation has been studied, for example, at the University of California, Berkeley (Vihman 1971; see Tuisk 2014), the Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich (Winkler 1999), the University of California, Santa Barbara (Balodis 2018), and Stanford University (Kiparsky 2017). Livonian morphology and syntax have been analysed at the University of Göttingen (Winkler & Pajusalu 2016, 2018), the University of Turku (Inaba 2015), Uppsala University (Blokland & Inaba 2018), and the University of Oxford (Ainsworth 2019) (see also Norvik 2016). Livonian has been described in the broader context of the Uralic languages and its language contacts at the University of Vienna (e.g., Laakso 2011, Laakso 2022). Livonian language sociolinguistics has been examined at University College London (Moseley 2014) and the University of York (O'Rourke 2018). Livonian has been included in the project of the language-independent Giellatekno infrastructure at Tromsø in Norway (Rueter 2014). In addition to the University of Tartu, University of Helsinki, and University of Latvia, Livonian has also been taught at universities in several other countries, such as the Budapest ELTE University, Prague Charles University, University of Vienna, Uppsala University, and others.

## 2. Livonian language research at the University of Tartu until World War II

University of Tartu faculty members and alumni have focused their work on the Livonians and the Livonian language since the 17th century. **Thomas Hiärn** (1638–1678), who studied in Tartu, collected valuable data on the Livonians. His chronicle *Ehst-, Lyf- und Lettlaendische*

*Geschichte* consists of data on Livonian territories and language. A study was conducted in 1693 under the supervision of the University of Tartu professor of rhetoric and poetics **Olof Nilsson Hermelin** (1658–?), which also included the Livonians. The studies of **Friedrich Kruse** (1790–1866), who was a well-known researcher and a professor of history at the university, also provide valuable information on the Livonians (see Vääri 2016: 277–279).

The first faculty member of the University of Tartu who wrote down Livonian from Livonian speakers was the Estonian language lecturer **Dietrich Heinrich Jürgenson** (1804–1841). He visited the Livonians around Salaca in 1839 and recorded examples of their language, which led him to publish an article the following year weighing the historical connection between the Finnish, Estonian, and Livonian languages, and calling the languages sisters (see Vääri 2016: 244, Pajusalu 2011: 221–224). Livonians are mentioned in works by many researchers working at UT in the 19th and early 20th centuries (see Vääri 2016: 278–281), but systematic study of Livonian started at UT only when the university became an independent Estonian national university.

Livonian language research at UT was initiated by the Finnish Professor of Finnic languages **Lauri Kettunen**. Although he worked in Tartu only a few years (1920–1924), he managed to create the basis for the Livonian language research tradition at the university. He established the phonetics lab at UT in order to study Livonian, Estonian, and Votic pronunciation using a kymograph, palatography, and photography (Ariste 1983: 314, Alvre 2003: 131). While teaching at UT, Kettunen visited the Courland Livonians on several occasions and published his fieldwork results as a separate book (Kettunen 1925); this work laid the foundation for a description of Livonian based on experimental phonetic data.

In his first expedition to the Livonians in 1920, Kettunen brought with him only one linguistics student, **Oskar Loorits** (1900–1961), who was secretary of the Mother Tongue Society at that time. Oskar Loorits immediately became more interested in Livonian beliefs and folklore, and his extensive documentation of Livonian is of great value to researchers. In the following years, he focused on investigating Livonian folklore and defended his doctoral dissertation in 1926 on Livonian folk religion. Loorits actively contributed to Livonian community actions and wrote poems in Livonian.

After Lauri Kettunen, **Julius Mägiste** (1900–1978) became the Professor of Finnic languages at UT and was a professor between 1929–1944. Although Mägiste’s first studies and his doctoral thesis about Finnic diminutives (1928) were of a comparative nature, Livonian had an important role in his work. Mägiste wrote his first article focusing exclusively on Livonian already in the 1920s. This was followed by an etymological study of Livonian vocabulary (Mägiste 1928, 1931). It is known that Mägiste did his first fieldwork in Courland only in 1943, when he visited the Livonians together with ethnologist **Gustav Ränk** (1902–1998). Mägiste later published the Livonian texts in Finland from this fieldwork (1964).

As a refugee after World War II, Mägiste continued his Livonian language research at Lund University. He recorded Livonian language material from Livonians who fled to Sweden and also studied old Livonian language documentation (Mägiste 1961). The stories of Livonians who migrated to Sweden were collected by Mägiste in 1947–1949 and 1957. After his death, these stories were published in a book (Mägiste 2006) by the Finno-Ugrian Society of Finland (see Blumberga 2011: 36–37).

In the 1920s and 1930s, many University of Tartu students were interested in the Livonians and the Livonian language. **Paulopriit Voolaine** (1899–1985), who later studied the South Estonian language islands of Latvia, wrote a prize-winning work on Livonian quantitative relations in 1922. **Villem Ernits** (1891–1982), who had studied Slavic languages, visited the Courland Livonians on several occasions. He is the author of several popular overviews of the Livonians and the Livonian language situation, including some published in Hungary. Livonian, Estonian, and Latvian language contacts are described in the studies of **Peeter Arumaa** (1900–1982) and **Karl Aben** (1896–1976), who were UT researchers focusing on the Baltic languages. Arumaa’s main interest was the Slavic languages, but in 1935 he published a study on Estonian, Livonian, and Latvian shared phraseology and syntax. In 1947, Aben defended his dissertation on Estonian and Livonian loans in Latvian vocabulary.

### 3. Livonian language research at the University of Tartu in the second half of the 20th century

After World War II, **Paul Ariste** (1905–1990) became the leading researcher and lecturer on kindred languages at the University of Tartu. He became a UT assistant professor in 1941 and became a professor in 1949. Ariste's first article – a piece published in Esperanto in 1921 when he was a schoolboy and still named Paul Berg – was on the Livonians. Ariste's connection to the Livonians and the Livonian language resurfaced in the late 1940s, when he organised a Finno-Ugric field study for UT students in the summer of 1948 in the Livonian villages of Courland. Later researchers of Livonian language and culture – Professor Eduard Vääri, Tõnu Karma, and others – participated in this expedition (Karma 1986). Ariste led fieldwork expeditions to the Livonians until the 1950s, resulting in a number of course and diploma works. Ariste himself published several articles on Livonian in the 1950s; one of these focused on Livonian palatalisation (Ariste 1959).

In the summer of 1950, **Huno Rätsep** (born in 1927) – who would go on to become a language professor at the University of Tartu in Estonia – participated in the Livonian summer field study. He collected Livonian language materials for his diploma work (1951) dealing with Finnic phraseology. He also published a separate article on Livonian phraseology (Rätsep 1959) and later examined Estonian and Livonian shared vocabulary (Rätsep 1982). Rätsep's contribution as a Livonian language teacher is also appreciated – over the decades he taught Livonian to UT students specialising in Estonian.

**Eduard Vääri** (1926–2005) was a young lecturer in 1954 when Professor Paul Ariste asked him to supervise the Courland Livonian summer field studies. Vääri had already taken part in the first post-war exploratory trip to the Livonians in 1948, and in the same year wrote an extensive UT prize-winning work on the development of the Livonian literary language. In 1953, Vääri defended his PhD thesis on Finnic kinship vocabulary and in the same year started working as a lecturer at the University of Tartu. His task at the Department of Finno-Ugric Languages was to lead the Livonian study and teaching programme. He would continue to do this work consistently over the next decades.

Vääri's first published article in 1958 explained the dialect differences of Livonian, his comprehensive 1959 overview of Livonian

language research history continues to be in use. In the 1960s, Vääri concentrated on researching Livonian derivation, publishing numerous articles on the subject and also a doctoral thesis in 1975. In addition to his studies on the structure of Livonian, Vääri studied Livonian place names and personal names, recent Livonian cultural history, etc. Vääri watched the life of the Livonian community through the second half of the 20th century and made expert assessments of the Livonian language situation for decades. At the University of Tartu, he supervised the course and diploma papers focusing on Livonian, and taught a variety of Livonian language courses. He also became an important supporter of the Livonian community and a spokesperson for the Livonians. (Pajusalu 2016)

The students of Eduard Vääri have worked on Livonian both in Estonia and Latvia. **Kersti Boiko** (born in 1962), who graduated from the University of Tartu and defended her doctoral thesis in Latvia, taught Livonian in the 1990s at the University of Latvia in Rīga. She compiled the Livonian language textbook *Līvõ kēļ* in 2000. In 2008, its texts were published as a separate brochure with the audio recordings read by Livonian speaker Grizelda Kristiņ. Boiko's work at the University of Latvia was continued by **Ērika Krautmane** (born in 1972), who obtained her BA and MA at UT. Her master's thesis (defended in 2010) focused on the Livonian mood system. **Tiina Halling** (born in 1956) received her master's degree at UT. She defended her dissertation on Livonian language case functions and has also studied Livonian personal names. Her course and diploma works focused on the object in Livonian and compound sentences.

**Tiit-Rein Viitso's** (born in 1938) interest in the Livonians began already as a schoolboy (Tuisk & Pajusalu 2018). He wrote his first study on Livonian as a student – a course paper about derivative affixes in Joh. Andreas Sjögren's Livonian Dictionary in 1959. Viitso's scientific work with Livonian started in the beginning of the 1970s. He began to do regular fieldwork in Courland from the summer of 1972, working extensively with several Livonian language informants. Since 1974, Viitso has published several dozen significant articles on Livonian. In his doctoral thesis (1981), he focused on Livonian phonology. Viitso studied the specifics of Livonian language pronunciation, Livonian inflectional morphology and syntax, the historical contacts of Livonian and Livonian dialects (Viitso's complete Livonian bibliography is

available in Tuisk & Pajusalu 2018). Viitso's research on Livonian is summarised in his book about the Livonian language and Finnic linguistic landscapes (Viitso 2008). His decades-long fieldwork results are summarised in the large Livonian-Estonian-Latvian Dictionary (Viitso & Ernštreits 2012, published by the University of Tartu and Latvian Language Agency), which contains a Livonian grammatical overview and inflection types.

Tiit-Rein Viitso started working as a full-time lecturer at the University of Tartu in 1989 as a professor of Estonian, and from 1993 to 2003 as a professor of Finnic languages. In the 1990s, when several students of Livonian origin began to study at UT, Viitso became one of their most beloved teachers and tutors. Viitso also compiled Livonian language teaching materials and attended Livonian language courses in Estonia and Latvia. Since 1998, he has led the International Society of Livonian Friends.

#### **4. Livonian language research at the University of Tartu since the 2000s**

One of the students who started his research career under Viitso's supervision was **Valts Ernštreits** (born in 1974). He began his studies at UT in 1991, obtained his master's degree in 2002 under the supervision of Viitso, and defended his doctoral thesis on the development of the Livonian literary language in 2010. After that, Ernštreits worked as a researcher of Livonian at the University of Tartu. After the University of Latvia Livonian Institute was established in 2018, he became the first chair of the institute, and in 2019 was chosen as a principal investigator at the University of Latvia. Since 2021, he has been an advisor to the Minister of Culture of the Republic of Latvia on implementation of cultural policy.

Valts Ernštreits can be considered one of the most outstanding Livonian linguists and developers of the Livonian literary language. His studies focus on clarifying the assumptions and perspectives for development of Livonian as a modern literary language (Ernštreits 2011 and 2013) as well as possibilities for expanding the Livonian lexicon (Ernštreits 2016). In addition to Livonian, Ernštreits has also researched and promoted contacts between the Estonian and Latvian languages and

was the editor and editor-in-chief of the Estonian-Latvian dictionary (Ernštreits et al. 2013). He was the chairman of the Livonian Culture Centre in Rīga and the editor of the *Livones* web portal (*livones.net*). In 2020, Ernštreits received the international *Ilmapuu* (World Tree) Award for promoting Livonian language and culture.

Most Livonian language learners at the University of Tartu have always been Estonians. **Miina Norvik** (born in 1985) defended her doctoral thesis on Livonian future forms at UT in 2015. Her post-doctoral project at Uppsala University focuses on continuity and change in Finnic language structure in light of language contact. **Tuuli Tuisk** (born in 1979) defended her thesis on Livonian word prosody in the same year. Her postdoctoral project at the University of Copenhagen deals with *stød* in the languages around the Baltic Sea, with Livonian being the target language. Both Norvik and Tuisk are continuing to study Livonian at UT and teach Livonian to current students. **Marili Tomingas** (born in 1993) is currently a doctoral student at the University of Tartu, her research topic deals with Livonian personal pronouns and demonstrative words.

Most foreign students who come to learn Livonian at UT are from Latvia, but some also come from several other countries, including Lithuania, Finland, Germany, Norway, the Czech Republic, and Hungary. Some of these students went on to study at various other universities, such as the Norwegian **Tor Tveite** (born in 1968) who studied Livonian at UT under Tiit-Rein Viitso's guidance and finished at the University of Helsinki with his in-depth research on the use of the object in Livonian (Tveite 2004). **Patrick O'Rourke** (born in 1990), a student of Finnish-English origin, completed his bachelor's degree at UT on the shared features of Salaca Livonian and the Häädemeeste dialect of Estonian, followed by his master's thesis at the University of York on Livonian social networks (see O'Rourke 2018). He is currently doing his doctoral studies at the University of Tartu. Lithuanian **Milda Ona Dailidėnaitė** (born in 1990) is a doctoral student at UT and studies the development of imperatives in Southern Finnic and Baltic languages, focusing on Livonian.

Livonian has also been studied by researchers and professors of Estonian at UT. Professor Huno Rätsep has already been mentioned above. Professor of Estonian Dialectology and History of the Estonian Language **Karl Pajusalu** (born in 1963) studied contacts between

southwestern Estonian dialects and Livonian in his doctoral thesis (1996), and later investigated the formation of Salaca Livonian and its relationship with other Estonian and Livonian dialects (e.g., Pajusalu 2014). Together with Prof. **Helle Metslang** (born in 1950) and researcher **Petar Kehayov** (born in 1972), Pajusalu has studied evidentiality in Livonian (Kehayov, Metslang & Pajusalu 2012). Helle Metslang also analysed Livonian negation together with other UT linguists (Metslang et al. 2015). Prof. **Urmas Sutrop** (born in 1956) has studied the formation of the historical Livonian language area (e.g., Sutrop 2014).

In the 2000s, the Finno-Ugric prosody project was initiated by the late Professor Emeritus of Linguistics at the Ohio State University **Ilse Lehiste** (1922–2010). Experimental-phonetic research on Livonian prosody was carried out at the University of Tartu within the framework of this project (Lehiste et al. 2008). In 2021, UT Professor of Language Technology **Mark Fišel** (born in 1983) initiated the task of developing neural machine translation between Livonian and English. It is part of the Finno-Ugric machine translation engine developed by the neural machine translation lab at the University of Tartu.

## 5. Academic instruction of Livonian and fieldwork in Livonian areas

Although Livonian language teaching in Tartu began in the early years of its status as the national university, Livonian had also been part of linguistics courses earlier. In 1874–1886, Michael Weske (Mihkel Veske, 1843–1890) was a lecturer of the Estonian language and taught a course on Finnish, Livonian, and Estonian comparative grammar in 1875 and 1878 (Viitso 2003: 283).

Consistent teaching of Livonian began at the University of Tartu in the 1920s. Prof. Lauri Kettunen started by teaching Livonian language courses in addition to his courses on the history of the Finnic languages, Finnish dialects, and the old Finnish literary language as well as Votic, Karelian, and Veps. According to the schedule of lectures and practical work at the University of Tartu (“Eesti Vabariigi Tartu Ülikooli loengute ja praktiliste tööde kava. Programme des cours et des travaux pratiques de l’Université de Tartu 1919–1940”), between 1920–1923 Kettunen taught a total of five Livonian language courses. Kettunen’s successor, Julius Mägiste, started teaching courses and leading practical work on

the Finnic languages in 1925. In the 1920s and 1930s, Livonian was generally taught comparatively with other Finnic languages (e.g., Finnic sound history, morphology, noun derivation), but Mägiste also taught four separate Livonian courses in 1928, 1929, 1931, and 1936.

After World War II, Livonian language teaching continued at the University of Tartu Department of Finno-Ugric Studies. During the 1950–1990s, i.e., for almost half a century, Eduard Vääri offered various Livonian courses to students studying Finno-Ugric languages. Huno Rätsep taught Livonian to Estonian students. For a period, Tiina Halling also taught Livonian courses. After Estonia regained its independence, Tiit-Rein Viitso remained the main Livonian language instructor. The courses consisted of Livonian for beginners as well as advanced learners, and also discussed the Livonian literary language. After becoming professor emeritus in 2003, Viitso continued Livonian language teaching as a senior researcher until 2016. Since 2008, together with Viitso, Livonian language courses have been taught by Valts Ernštreits, Miina Norvik, and Tuuli Tuisk. Karl Pajusalu has taught a special course on Salaca Livonian.

While at some point the learners of Livonian were students of linguistics, the circle of interest has expanded in recent decades. In addition to Estonian and Finno-Ugric linguistics, there have been students of history, literature, culture, law, informatics, Slavic philology, Scandinavian studies, and other specialities who have studied Livonian at the University of Tartu. The circle of different nationalities has also expanded. As already mentioned above, students from different countries are interested in learning Livonian. Today, in addition to Estonians, students of Latvian, Lithuanian, Finnish, Russian, German, Norwegian, Czech, Hungarian, Japanese, Chinese, and other nationalities are also studying Livonian at UT.

Outside of lecture halls, **student field studies** and **other fieldwork** in Livonian areas has also played an important role. These can be regarded as beginning with Lauri Kettunen and Oskar Loorits' joint expedition to the Livonians in 1920. This trip marked the beginning of the active support of kindred languages in Estonia (Tuisk 2021: 390–392). The valuable material gathered during this and the following Livonian expeditions (see Figure 1) was published and used in their research. While Lauri Kettunen's interest in Livonian research was linguistic, Oskar Loorits focused on Livonian folklore and religion.



**Figure 1.** Professor Lauri Kettunen with Livonians at the Irē (Mazirbe) railway station in 1933 (*Bruno Dziadkowsky, Eesti Rahva Muuseumi fotokogu, ERM Fk 827:79*).

During the Soviet period, Livonian language student field studies became regular events. Paul Ariste began these in the summer of 1948, when the first post-World War II Livonian student field study was held (see Figure 2). As this was the first post-war expedition to the Livonians, the number of Livonians left in this area was clarified – according to the survey, 700–800. Under Ariste’s supervision, Livonian texts and folklore were collected, surveys on grammar were conducted, and material culture was studied (Vääri 1994: 244). Ariste led the Livonian expeditions until 1950. After that he focused on expeditions to Votic and Ingrian areas, while the Livonian student field studies were taken over some years later by Eduard Vääri.

Eduard Vääri conducted Livonian fieldwork and student field studies beginning in 1954. Numerous diploma and course works were completed under his supervision. The range of topics of student works was broad, including studies on Livonian vocabulary describing nature, food, plants, and construction, Livonian adverbs, pre- and postpositions, simple and compound sentences, somatic phraseology, reflections of Livonians in Estonian newspapers, Livonian proverbs, etc. The Livonians and Livonian language were not only Vääri’s scientific research focus, but he also was an essential part of the Livonian community and events in a multitude of ways (see Vääri 2016).



**Figure 2.** Professor Paul Ariste with students on the Livonian Coast in 1948 (*Baiba Šuvcāne private collection*).



**Figure 3.** UT students help to plant potatoes during Livonian fieldwork in 1965 (*AEDKL PF0053-012*).

**Mati Hint** (1937–2019) first joined Eduard Vääri’s Livonian expedition in 1959 as a student at the University of Tartu. He visited the Livonians also in the following years and, while working later at the Institute of the Estonian Language, he participated in different Livonian expeditions as a scientific adviser on Livonian. He and **Aino Valmet**

(1928–1993) organised Livonian field study trips for students and academic staff in the 1960s and 1970s (Figure 3). **Valve-Liivi Kingisepp** (born in 1935) and other individuals at the institute helped them with accommodations, catering, and technical matters as well as obtaining the necessary licences to enter the USSR border zone within which the Livonian Coast was located. In the 1980s, the fieldwork expeditions to the Livonian areas were the most active. Many students completed their course work and diploma thesis on the basis of materials they collected during their fieldwork. Over the past decade, Livonian language trips for students and other academic researchers have been led mainly by Tiit-Rein Viitso, Tiina Halling, Valts Ernštreits, and others.

Tiit-Rein Viitso has had an important role in the work on Livonian language, culture, and people. He did his first fieldwork in Courland in the summer of 1972. From that point on, he returned to do fieldwork in Livonian villages nearly every year. As a result of his decades of visits and research, numerous studies on Livonian have been compiled. Several of his students have become researchers of Livonian language thanks to his training and encouragement. Several BA, MA, and PhD theses relating to Livonian were defended under his supervision. In the 21st century, Viitso has undoubtedly had a role as the most important expert on Livonian in student field studies and fieldwork (Figure 4).



**Figure 4.** Professor Tiit-Rein Viitso with students in Salacgrīva in 2008 (*Tuuli Tuisk private collection*).

In 1998, the International Society of Livonian Friends was founded and Tiit-Rein Viitso was elected its chairman. The purpose of the society has been to support, protect, promote, develop, and popularise Livonian language and culture. The core of the society grew out from the University of Tartu and many of its members are closely connected to the university. On the initiative of the society, several academic trips to historical areas connected to the Livonians have been organised. These trips have taken those interested in the Livonians and their history not only to the Courland and Vidzeme Livonian areas, but also, for example, to the Leivu and Lutsi South Estonian language islands, to Latgale, former eastern Prussia (in Poland), and Belarus. A number of important Livonian books have been published in cooperation between the society and other institutions, e.g., the Livonian poetry books *Salats joug kolm aġa* (Salaca Livonian-Estonian-Latvian, 2013), *Trilium* (Livonian-English, 2018), *Trilium 2.0* (Livonian-Estonian-English, 2020).

In the 21st century, the **Livonian summer universities** have become an important part of the tradition of Livonian lectures and seminars, language learning, and student field studies. The first International Livonian Summer University took place on August 10–18, 2013 in the eastern Courland village of Kuoštrõg (see Figure 5). The second Livonian Summer University was held on August 12–20, 2017 in the western Courland Livonian village of Pizā. The third university took place on July 30–August 8, 2021 in Kuoštrõg and Irē (Figure 6). These summer universities have been organised in cooperation with the University of Tartu, the Livonian Culture Centre, the Latvian Language Agency, and the University of Latvia. The main organiser of the third summer university was the University of Latvia Livonian Institute. Students and researchers from different countries have participated in these events and knowledge on Livonian language and culture has been shared at them in a number of different languages. The charm and uniqueness of the Livonian summer universities lies largely in the fact that they take place in the historical Livonian settlements and environment. Along with this, involvement and participation of Livonian speakers and people with Livonian roots is no less important. These summer universities are not just something that are introduced and organised by different institutions, but they also involve people with Livonian heritage.



**Figure 5.** Participants of the first Livonian summer university in Ventspils in 2013 (*livones.net*).



**Figure 6.** Participants of the third Livonian summer university in 2021 in Kuoštrõg (*Miina Norvik private collection*).

## 5. Livonian materials at the UT Archives of Estonian Dialects and Kindred Languages

The Archives of Estonian Dialects and Kindred Languages (AEDKL) is a valuable collection of Uralic linguistic materials at the University of Tartu (Rätsep 2003, Lindström, Lippus & Tuisk 2019). In addition to other Finno-Ugric languages, the archives also contain various materials on Livonian. Most of the materials in the archives are digitised and accessible through this online database: <https://murdearhiiv.ut.ee>.

Although there are records of the Livonian sound recordings made between 1938 and 1957 in the database, the first existing recordings are from 1967 and 1968. In 1967, Marilyn May Vihman recorded Livonian speaker Silviija Rudzītis in the USA for her doctoral dissertation on Livonian phonology. In 1968, Professor Eduard Vääri recorded Livonian speakers Jõņ Zēberg, Katrin Krason, and Emma Hausmaņ during fieldwork in Livonian villages in Courland. Altogether there are about 147 hours of digital recordings of Livonian from 23 female and 16 male speakers (see Table 1).

The main themes of the recordings are everyday life, work, family, Livonian folk tales and legends, but there are also topics connected with specific purposes such as phonetic questionnaires, sound examples and sentences, readings of the Livonian textbook, sound files of one Livonian movie. There are also recordings of the researchers speaking Livonian. Note that some archive entries are incomplete due to insufficient information, for example, sometimes the surname or birth date of the speaker or the dates of the recordings are missing. Some sound recordings are copies of materials archived at the Institute of the Estonian Language.

Table 1. Digital Livonian sound recordings in the AEDKL (as of December 2021).

Time Period	Number of files	Duration (hh:mm:ss)	Recorders, interviewers	Speakers <sup>1</sup>
1960s	16	3:21:52	M. M. Vihman, E. Vääri	Silvija Rudzītis (Vaid), Jõņ Zēberg (Vaid), Katrin Krason (Kuoštrõg), Emma Hausman (Kūolka)
1970s	52	19:58:28	T. Karma, M. Hint, J. Peebo, T.-R. Viitso, H. Rätsep, E. Vääri, V. Damilov	Katrin Krason (Kuoštrõg), Albert Kristiņ, Alfrīd Lēman, Teodor Lēman, Hārmin Zivert, Eliz(e) Lepst(e) [Kāpberg], Poulin Štob, Jõņ Zēberg (Vaid), Līda Frīdrihson, Līna Zandberg, Oto Rozenfeld, Aņdrõks Rudbah, August Freiberg
1980s	115	58:24:20	T.-R. Viitso	Pētõr Damberg (Sīkrõg), Alma Blūm (Īra), Viktor Berthold (Kūolka), Alfõn Berthold (Vaid), Poulin Kļaviņa (Vaid), Alfrīd Frīdman (Sānag), Olga Rozefeld (Kūolka), Oskar Stalt (Kūolka)
1990s	33	11:52:56	T.-R. Viitso, T. Halling, V. Ernštreits,	Poulin Kļaviņa (Vaid), Elfrīda Žagare (Sīkrõg), Elza Mansurova (Vaid), Edgar Refenberg
2000s	40	11:36:08	T.-R. Viitso, K. Pajusalu, S. Pajusalu, P. Lippus, T. Halling	Vīktor Berthold (Kūolka), Julgē Stalte (Rīga), Valts Ernštreits (Rīga), Baiba Damberg, Ieva Ozoliņa (Rīga), Anete Ozoliņa (Rīga), Dagmāra Ziemele (Rīga), Zoja Sīle (Sānag), Maija Norenberga (Rīga), Poulin Kļaviņa (Vaid), Elfrīda Žagare (Sīkrõg)
2010s	86	28:33:09	T.-R. Viitso, V. Ernštreits, T. Tuisk	Grizelda Kristiņ (Vaid)
2020s	15	1:02:51	V. Ernštreits, T. Tuisk	Julgē Stalte (Rīga), Ulla Fraser (Rīga)
unknown	43	12:21:28	S. Suhonen, H. Rätsep, T.-R. Viitso	Grizelda Kristiņ (Vaid), Hilda Grīva (Sīkrõg), Poulin Kļaviņa (Vaid), unknown speakers

1 The Livonian names of the Livonian villages are used in this table and elsewhere in the article, the Latvian names of the villages are given parenthetically: Īra (Lielirbe), Irē (Mazirbe), Kūolka (Kolka), Kuoštrõg (Koštrags), Pīza (Miķeļtornis), Sānag (Saunags), Sīkrõg (Sīkrags), Vaid (Vaide).

The written materials consist of unpublished manuscripts, including student coursework, report papers, seminar papers, transcriptions, and written notes on Livonian.<sup>2</sup> Student reports from Livonian fieldwork can be found in fieldwork diaries. There are also BA, MA, and PhD theses defended at the Institute of Estonian and General Linguistics. The first manuscript is a student seminar work which dates to 1922. It is an experimental phonetic study on Livonian quantity by Paulopriit Voolaine (AEDKL S0080, Figure 7). In 1922, the Faculty of Philosophy announced an award for experimental phonetic research on Finnic languages and Voolaine's work received the first prize.

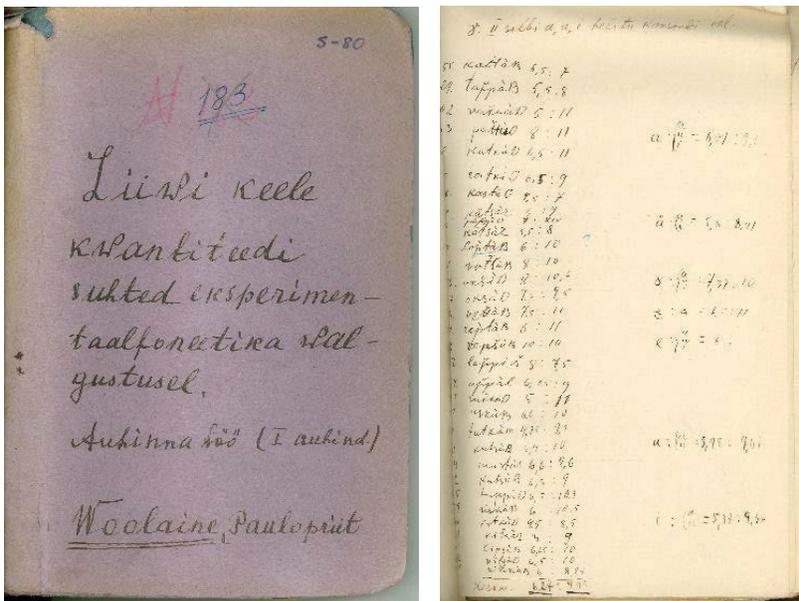


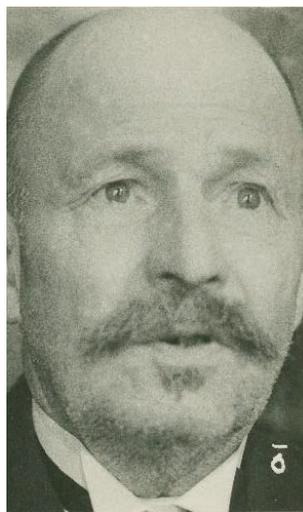
Figure 7. Paulopriit Voolaine's manuscript from 1922 (AEDKL S0080-001, S0080-017).

The majority of Livonian manuscripts are from the 1980s. At this time, the fieldwork expeditions to the Livonian areas were the most active and students completed their research on the basis of the materials they collected during the fieldwork. The range of the topics

2 Due to a variety of unfortunate reasons, some manuscripts have been lost or destroyed over the course of the history of the archive. In these cases, there remains a record of the manuscript shown in the archive.

varied and included research, for example, on Livonian adverbs, simple and compound sentences, pre- and postpositions, phraseology, toponymy, vocabulary (e.g., vocabulary describing women's work, plant names, construction). The main supervisors of the studies were Eduard Vääri, **Paul Alvre** (1921–2008), and Tiit-Rein Viitso.

The collection holds photos from Livonian fieldwork expeditions, Livonian speakers as well as linguistic events, e.g., Livonian conferences, seminars, book presentations. For instance, there are photos from 1936 of Livonian speaker Kõrli Stalte pronouncing Livonian vowels (see Figure 8). It was the young Paul Ariste, who performed an experiment at the university in the 1930s on the pronunciation of different Finno-Ugric languages. There are also some unique video clips from Livonian fieldwork in the 1970s.



**Figure 8.** Livonian Kõrli Stalte pronouncing the long vowel  $\bar{o}$  (*AEDKL PF0003-104*).

## 6. Summary

Researching and teaching the language of the Livonians at the University of Tartu has national as well as international importance. The Livonians have had a role in the development of the Estonian understanding of their own identity and the Livonian language has had a role in understanding the roots and unique features of the Estonian language. In the early 1920s, when the Finnic professorship was created at the University of Tartu, one of its tasks was clarifying the background of the Estonian language and the Livonian language had a central place in this endeavour.

The Livonians and the Livonian language have given a great deal to the University of Tartu as well as other institutions. Hopefully, the giving is reciprocal and that, directly or indirectly, the Livonians and the Livonian language have also gained something from all of this.

The university's intangible support is perhaps most easily and clearly expressed in the recognition and appreciation of Livonian language and culture. Given the events of both the past and present, this will undoubtedly remain one of the most important points of reference. In material terms, Livonians have been helped in publishing literature in their own language and in teaching Livonian. Help is given to Livonian music by ensuring that it is heard in Estonia and that Livonian literature also spreads here. Knowledge of the Livonians and their language has reached many individuals with the help of UT.

The study and teaching of Livonian at the University of Tartu has had an international dimension on numerous levels. First and foremost, this work has resulted in academic engagement with our southern neighbours. The UL Livonian Institute is a notable cross-border example of this cooperation, which involves individuals working on a variety of topics. At the same time, Livonian and its unique features have received much greater international attention and have promoted cooperation between UT and linguists at top universities in Finland, Germany, the United States, and other countries. Livonian language and culture have motivated students from different countries to come and study at the University of Tartu. Despite its small number of speakers, Livonian has remained an indispensable part and cornerstone of the Estonian language area and Finnic linguistics as a whole.

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**Kokkuvõte. Tuuli Tuisk, Karl Pajusalu: Sajand liivi uuringuid Tartu Ülikoolis.** Liivi keele ja kultuuri tähendus eestlastele on suurem kui pelgalt ajalooline lähedus. Liivi uuringud on olnud osa Eesti rahvuslikust enesemääratlusest. Käesolev artikkel esitab ülevaate liivi keele uurimisest ja õpetamisest Tartu Ülikoolis alates aastast 1919, kui sellest ülikoolist sai Eesti rahvusülikool. Järjepidev liivi keele ja kultuuriga tegelemine viimase saja aasta jooksul on hea näide Eesti rahvusülikooli laiemast missioonist, kus rahvuslik ja rahvusvaheline mõõde põimuvad mitmel moel. Tartu Ülikool on ainuke asutus Eestis, kus liivi keelega on nii mitmekülgset ja pikaajalist tegeldud – õpetatud, uuritud ja tutvustatud.

**Märksõnad:** liivi keel, läänemeresoome keeled, uurimislugu, akadeemiline keeleõpetus, Tartu Ülikool

**Kubbõvõttõks. Tuuli Tuisk, Karl Pajusalu: Līvõd tuņšlimizt āigastsadā Tartu Iļzskūols.** Līvõ kīel ja kultūr tāntõks ēstlizt pierāst um jo sūr āb ku set istõrili ležglit. Līvõd tuņšlimi um võnd ikš jag Ēstimõ eņtšmēļitõt. Kēra tāmikšõb iļvaņtlõks iļ līvõ kīel tuņšlimiz ja opātimiz Tartu Iļzskūols 1919. āigastõt, ku Tartu Iļzskūolst tuļ Ēsti rov iļļiskūol, tāmpiz sõņõ. Līvõ kīelkõks ja kultūrõks jelāmi perīz sadā āigast āigal um jõvā nāgļõb Ēstimõ rov iļzskūol jo laigāst missijõt, missõt um nādõb, kui iđtuoizõks sieggõbõd rovvi ja rovvõdvaili. Tartu Iļļiskūol um āinagi optõbkūož Ēstimõl, kus līvõ kēļ um võnd nei sūr ov sizāl kõgiņ aigõ – siedā um opātõd ja tuņšõltõd, siestõ um rõkāndtõd.